

INTRODUCTION OF THE INFANT AND TODDLER DURABLE PRODUCT SAFETY ACT AND THE DANNY KEYSAR CHILD PRODUCT SAFETY NOTIFICATION ACT

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, today I am once again introducing two bills that would help prevent needless deaths and injuries of young children: the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act and the Danny Keysar Child Product Safety Notification Act. These bills would help us protect infant and toddlers from dangerous products, both before they arrive on the shelves—and after they end up in homes.

The Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act would require infant and toddler products to receive a federal seal of approval before they are sold. This bill is long overdue.

Currently, most consumers believe that, because a product is on a shelf, it is safe. A Coalition for Consumer Rights' survey in Illinois found that 75 percent of adults believe that the government oversees pre-market testing for children's products; 79 percent believe that manufacturers are required to test the safety of those products before they are sold. For most products, neither is true.

In fact, there are no mandatory safety standards for the majority of the children's products being sold today. The majority of the standards that are in place are "voluntarily" set by the very industries looking to make profits. They are also allowed to police themselves about whether the standards are enforced.

Let me stress what that means: although there may be voluntary standards in place, there are no requirements that all potential hazards are addressed in those standards. For instance, the voluntary standards for bassinets set by the industry did not have height requirement for the sides or any test to make sure the baby couldn't fall out. Only because of the tenacity of advocates like Kids in Danger, was one finally set. There are also no consequences for the manufacturer if the standards are not met, and no requirements for products to be tested to see if the standards are met. This is true even for baby carriers, cradles, play pens, and high chairs. For the few products that do have mandatory federal standards, because there are no testing requirements, the standards are meaningless.

Although the Consumer Products Safety Commission—the CPSC—requires no testing and manufacturers may not perform their own tests, do not be mistaken, children's products are tested. They are tested in our own homes, with our children and grandchildren as test dummies. The cost of those tests can be a panicked child, amputated fingers, fractured skulls, or a dead child.

Unfortunately, a trip to the emergency room or the morgue is often the only way to know if a product is unsafe. This is unacceptable.

Parents and caregivers must have assurance that when they buy a product, it will be safe. Therefore, the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act would not only require the CPSC to issue mandatory safety standards for infant and toddler products, it would

require the testing and certification of these products by an independent third party before they are allowed to be sold to anyone.

To protect children should unsafe products make it into their homes—as is currently happening—we also have to make sure that we can get the hazards out as soon as possible. The Danny Keysar Child Product Safety Notification Act would help us do that by requiring that all children's durable products sold have recall registration cards attached to them and that manufacturers directly contact those who fill them out should there be a recall.

Although there is a shocking number of recalled products, our current recall system is failing. Actual notice of a recall is dependent on news outlets picking up the story and spreading the word. Notification targeted to owners of the products is rare, and many parents remain unaware of the dangers even when products are recalled. In fact, many families still have the dangerous products listed in this report in their homes because they have not happened to turn on the television at the right time or read the right newspaper. We need to make sure that notification is directed at the families that have bought these faulty products so they don't have to rely on chance to hear the news.

My colleague, Rep. FRED UPTON, and I named our bill that would help solve this problem the Danny Keysar Child Product Safety Notification Act because his story is a tragic example of the inadequacy of our current recall practices.

Danny Keysar, the precious 17-month old son of Linda Ginzel and her husband, Boaz Keysar, died when the Playskool Travel-Lite portable crib he had been napping in at his babysitter's home collapsed. The rails of the crib folded into a "V"-shaped wedge when he stood up, trapping his neck. He was strangled to death. It was May 12, 1998, five years after the CPSC had ordered it off the shelves because it was so dangerous.

Word of its hazard had not reached Danny's parents, the caregiver with whom he was staying, or a state safety inspector who visited the home just eight days before Danny's death. Had the Child Product Safety Notification Act been in effect, there would have been a much greater chance of saving Danny's life—and the 11 children who have since died from the TravelLite.

We know that recall registration cards work. My bill is modeled after the National Highway and Transportation Safety Administration's recall system for car seats. Since NHTSA started requiring car seats to have registration cards in 1993, the number of families registering increased by at least tenfold. In fact, 53 percent of parents who obtained cards mailed in the cards. Recall repair rates have gone up by 56 percent—all for a mere 43-cents per item. This bill will give families a much greater chance to repair, return, or discard any dangerous products that have made it into their children's nursery.

It is past due that we give parents the security they deserve and children the safety they need. I urge my colleagues to support these two bills.

INTRODUCTION OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 267 CONDEMNING THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN FOR ITS SEIZURE OF BRITISH SAILORS AND MARINES

HON. MARK STEVEN KIRK

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. KIRK. Madam Speaker, today I introduced House Resolution 267 with my fellow Iran Working Group co-Chair Congressman ROB ANDREWS (D-NJ) and Iran Working Group Vice-Chairs Dr. CHARLES BOUSTANY (R-LA) and RON KLEIN (D-FL). This resolution condemns the Islamic Republic of Iran for seizing 15 British sailors and marines in the Persian Gulf and calls for their immediate release. These sailors and marines, based on the HMS Cornwall, had finished a routine search of a civilian vessel in Iraqi waters at the time of the kidnapping. The Iranian regime now says it may charge the sailors and marines for illegally entering Iranian-controlled waters.

The British soldiers were captured a day before the UN debated additional sanctions for Iran's continued efforts to enrich uranium. The sanctions were unanimously approved, and include a ban on arms sales from Iran as well as freezing assets of 28 people and organizations involved with the nation's nuclear programs.

Our resolution also asks the Security Council to explore new economic sanctions against Iran, including a restriction on gasoline imports. Despite its status as a top oil producing nation, Iran is highly dependent on foreign gasoline due to severe mismanagement of its domestic energy supply. An international restriction on foreign gasoline is the most effective economic lever in our diplomatic toolbox to prevent further Iranian hostility, deny Iran's ability to militarize the Persian Gulf and enforce Iran's nonproliferation commitments.

The Iranian regime defied international law by seizing sailors in waters outside of its jurisdiction. Our resolution sends a strong message of condemnation from the House of Representatives.

I want to thank Reps. ANDREWS, BOUSTANY and KLEIN for leading with me on this resolution. I look forward to working with them and the more than fifty original cosponsors on this important initiative.

INTRODUCTION OF THE BLUE WATER HIGHWAY ACT OF 2007

HON. DAVE WELDON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Madam Speaker, today I introduced the Blue Water Highway Act of 2007.

As Members of this body know, the ability to cost-effectively transport goods to domestic markets is vital to our economy. It's becoming increasingly clear, however, that economic and population growth is far outpacing our ability to maintain and expand our existing transportation infrastructure, posing serious, long-term challenges to our current reliance upon land-based shipping.

In Florida and around the country, roadway congestion and driver shortages are already making it difficult for trucking companies to expand capacity. Freight shipping by rail is encountering serious capacity problems in some regions, as well. And, recent estimates indicate that overall freight traffic will continue to increase exponentially in the coming years—up as much as 70 percent by 2020.

Madam Speaker, we are presented with a choice as we seek to address this capacity crunch: We can try to engineer our way out of the current situation at hundreds of billions of dollars in new federal expenditures. Or, we can find alternate innovative modes of transportation that will help absorb some of the traffic our growing economy continues to create.

While we must continue to invest in our surface transportation infrastructure, I believe that an alternative, environmentally sound mode of transportation is at our fingertips that will lessen highway congestion, save energy, and reduce air pollution.

Short sea shipping, or what I call the “Blue Water Highway,” involves shipping cargo by sea between U.S. ports. By establishing a “highway” along our coast where smaller cargo ships travel from port to port along the Eastern Seaboard, Gulf Coast, Pacific Coastline, and the Great Lakes, we have the opportunity to significantly reduce highway congestion in an environmentally friendly and economically sound manner. Additionally, sea-based shipping would mitigate against wear and tear on our highways, potentially delaying the need for expensive taxpayer-funded improvement projects and allowing such funds instead to be used to free traffic congestion.

Though getting the Blue Water Highway up and running is no small task, I believe that a modest tax policy change provided in my legislation would significantly encourage the development of a short sea shipping industry.

The Blue Water Highway Act of 2007 would amend the Internal Revenue Code to exempt cargo shipped between U.S. mainland ports from the harbor maintenance tax. This simple tax reform would remove the primary prohibitive cost to short sea shipping, allowing designated cargo vessels to travel from Port Canaveral in Florida, to Baltimore, and then onto New York and Bridgeport, Conn. making other port calls along the way without having to pay the cargo tax each time it enters a port.

Madam Speaker, amending the harbor maintenance tax is a reasonable policy objective that would go a long way toward moving short sea shipping from the backwater of the shipping industry.

HONORING THE BREESE CENTRAL LADY COUGARS BASKETBALL TEAM

HON. JOHN SHIMKUS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. SHIMKUS. Madam Speaker, today I rise to honor the Breese Central Lady Cougars basketball team on their success in winning the championship game of the 28th annual Class A state tournament at Redbird Arena in Normal, Illinois.

Jessica Hemann, Courtney Strieker, Leann Voss, Britni Holtmann, K.C. Root, Christy

Rolfingsmeyer, Katie Robben, Kelsie Netemeyer, Katelin Wiegmann, Tiffany Hilmes, Katie Scheer, Lauren Budde, and Cassandra Deiters make up this victorious team of athletes, which are lead by Head Coach Nathan Rueter and Assistant Coaches Angela Witte and Kelly Hasheider.

The Number 11 State-Ranked Breese Central ladies received medals after winning against Number 9 State-Ranked Rochester in a 47–41 victory.

I am very pleased to congratulate the Breese Central Lady Cougars on their victory and wish them the best of luck for next season.

TRIBUTE TO DOLORES HUERTA

HON. JOE BACA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. BACA. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my strong support for H. Res. 37. This resolution honors Dolores Huerta for her commitment to protecting the rights of women and children everywhere, and improving the lives of farm workers.

I want to thank my colleague from California, Rep. HILDA SOLIS, for sponsoring this resolution.

Since 1955, Dolores Huerta has been a pre-eminent figure in the civil rights movement. She has dedicated her life to fighting for the rights of workers, women, and children. Dolores has lived a life full of compassion and love for her fellow man. Her actions helped to change the way farm workers were treated and further established fair treatment and respectable working conditions for them.

As a strong female leader, Dolores Huerta defied cultural and gender stereotypes. She has been awarded the Eleanor D. Roosevelt Human Rights Award and was inducted into the Women's Hall of Fame in 1993. Together with Cesar Chavez, she founded the National Farm Workers Association, now the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee.

Beyond her professional work, she is a proud mother of 11 children and many grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

I urge my colleagues to send a message of support for the rights of all workers and to honor the accomplishments of a true revolutionary, Dolores Huerta, by supporting H. Res. 37.

RECOGNIZING LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO'S CENTER FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. RAHM EMANUEL

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. EMANUEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize; Loyola University Chicago for its enduring commitment to community service and its creation of the Center for Public Service. I am pleased that the Center will house the congressional papers of former Congressman Henry J. Hyde and former Congressman Dan Rostenkowski.

Loyola's Center for Public Service will undertake the task of encouraging citizens to

dedicate their lives to civil service and government. Through research and discourse, this non-partisan academic unit will increase education on important policy issues.

Both Congressman Hyde and Congressman Rostenkowski attended Loyola, so it seems fitting that their work will be preserved there.

Congressman Hyde recently retired from Congress after serving the people of the Sixth district of Illinois for 15 terms. The former Dean of the Illinois delegation served as Chairman of the Judiciary Committee from 1995–2001 and was later Chairman of the International Relations Committee.

Congressman Rostenkowski, or Mr. Chairman as he is still known, served my district in the House and was a legislative force for 34 years. As the Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee, he played an important role in tax and trade policy for thirteen years.

Madam Speaker, I congratulate Loyola University Chicago for its creation of the Center for Public Service and its collection of the congressional papers of former Congressmen Henry J. Hyde and Dan Rostenkowski. I wish its faculty, staff and students the best of luck as they pursue lives of public service.

TRIBUTE TO SAM MURPHEY FOR A LIFETIME OF DEDICATED SERV- ICE TO THE NATION AND THE PEOPLE OF CENTRAL TEXAS

HON. CHET EDWARDS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, March 26, 2007

Mr. EDWARDS. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor a dedicated public servant of the people of Central Texas, Sam Murphey. Sam is about to embark on a well-deserved retirement after 22 years of service in the U.S. Army and 16 years looking after the needs of the people of Central Texas as my right-hand man and District Director.

Sam Murphey is a decorated soldier and veteran whose distinguished service in the United States Army and his service to the constituents of Central Texas is unparalleled in my experience. The positive impact Sam has had is immeasurable and proof that one person can truly make a difference in the lives of others. Sam is known by many names: husband, father, grandfather, motivator, leader, and confidante. I join the many others who are fortunate to call him “friend”.

Sam graduated from the University of Texas in 1967 earning a bachelors degree in business administration and a commission in the Regular Army of the United States as a 2nd Lieutenant of Field Artillery. Sam later earned his master of science degree in management from the University of Central Texas in 1981 and he has completed an additional 18 post-graduate hours of study in political science.

Following his graduation from the University of Texas, Sam began a 22-year career in the U.S. Army that took him to assignments in the United States, Europe, Korea and Vietnam. He spent his combat tour in Vietnam as a Field Artillery Forward Observer and Liaison Officer with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Other notable experiences during his military career include a teaching assignment in the Gunnery Department of the U.S. Army Field Artillery School, graduation from the Marine Corps